अल्जीरिया, बंगलादेश, कनाडा, चेक गणराज्य, आइवरी कोस्ट, कजाकस्तान, पाकिस्तान तथा यूगोस्लाविया में भारतीय राजनयिकों के कुछ पद रिक्त हैं । इनमें से कुछ रिक्तियां शीघ्र ही भर ली जायेंगी तथा अन्य समुचित समय पर भरी जायेंगी ।

(ख) भूटान, ब्रूनी, मालदीव और मंगोलिया में तैनात राजदूतों की कार्यावधि 1995 में समाप्त होगी क्योंकि इनकी नियुक्ति एक नियत कार्यकाल के लिये की गई थी ।

(ग) संवर्ग पद धारण करने वाले राजदूतों की कोई निर्धारित कार्यावधि नहीं होती है ।

US Assertions of Disputed Status of Kashmir

1307. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have taken note of the US Assistant Secretary of State, Robin Raphel's recent remarks that the status of Kashmir is disputed, that the US is helpless in stopping Pakistan from sponsoring terrorism in the Valley and her anxiety to circumvent the Pressler Amendment;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for US Government's inconsistent stand on Kashmir issue; and

(c) what action Government have taken or propose to take to reiterate its stand about the irrevocable accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India and change the US perception, not only on the Kashmir issue but also on the evolution of a new security relationship between US and Pakistan, particularly in the context of the impending visit to USA by the Pakistan Prime Minister?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Government have seen reports of remarks by the US Assistant Secretary of State about a number of issues relating to the Sub-Continent; including Kashmir, terrorism and the Pressler Amendment.

(b) The US maintains that its position on the Kashmir issue has been consistent and remains unchanged.

(c) Government have consistently maintained that the accession of J&K is irevocable and that it is an analienable part of India. The Government has regularly been briefing other Governments, including that of the US, regarding the actual situation in J&K and the hardship and loss of lives and property caused by Pakistan's unabated support for terrorism in J&K. Government also carefully monitor developments having a bearing in India's security and are committed to taking all steps necessary to safeguard our national interests.

Progress in the identification of Indo-China LAC

1308. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of meetings of Indo-China Expert Group on border issue have been held for identification of line of actual control;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what progress has been made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) to (c) The India—China Expert Group, which has been set up to assist the India-China Joint Working Group in implementation of the Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity Along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas has met thrice

so far, in New Delhi, February 2-4, 1994, in Beijing, April 21-22, 1994, and New Delhi, March 2-4, 1995.

The mandate of the Expert Group includes clarification of the line of actual control (LAC) between India and China, reduction of military forces along the India—China LAC, other confidence building measures and verification methods.

At its second meeting, the two sides reached agreement on the Work Regulations of the Expert Group which spells out the mandate, future tasks and modalities of the Expert Group.

At its third meeting, both sides noted with satisfaction that the situaion along the India—China LAC was peaceful. Continuing their discussions on additional confidence building measures, they had a useful exchange of views on the drafts on prior notification of military exercises and prevention of air intrusions. They also agreed that additional designated points for meetings between the border personnel of the two countries would be established at Nathu La in the Sikkim Sector and a point to be agreed in the Middle Sector of the India—China border areas.

Discussions in the Expert Group are progressing smoothly, with the two sides adopting a constructive and forward-looking approach. The next meeting of the Expert Group will be held in Beijing at a mutually convenient date in 1995.

India's rejection of restrictions on its peaceful nuclear programme

1309. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently ruled out the possibility of India agreeing to Unilaterally Cap fissile material production or accepting any restriction on its peaceful nuclear programme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In a statement issued by the official spokesman on the 11th February, 1995, Government has clearly stated that there is no question of India's unilaterally stopping the production of fissible material, or accepting restriction on its programmes for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

US Committee's Report indicting ISI on Kashmir

1310. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item which appeared in the Times of India dated 28th February, 1995 under the caption "Report indicts ISI on Kashmir";

(b) whether the report published by the Committee on International Security studies of American Academy of Arts and Sciences has confirmed India's charge that terrorists in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir are getting arms from Pakistan; and

(c) whether Government propose to take up the matter with Government of the USA and raise it in world fora; and if so, the details of the steps to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.